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Senate

The Senate met at 12:15 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KAY R. HAGAN, a Senator from the State of North Carolina.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment and light rises up in darkness for the godly, give our Senators the wisdom that saves them from false choices. Illuminate their path with the light of Your presence so that they will not stumble in all their deliberations. Keep their motives clean, their vision clear, their patriotism fervent, their speech guarded, their appraisals fair, and their consciences unbetrayed.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KAY R. HAGAN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 29, 2010.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KAY R. HAGAN, a Senator from the State of North Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. HAGAN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

KENTUCKY COAL MINE DISASTER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, many Kentuckians awoke this morning to the sad news that one miner was killed and another is missing after a ceiling collapse in an underground coal mine in Webster County, which is in the western part of Kentucky.

Right now, it is my understanding that MSHA officials are on the site and rescue teams are working to locate the missing miner. For now we can only hope their efforts are successful.

I ask my colleagues and the American people to keep the miners, their families, and the rescue workers in their prayers.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, for me, being a miner's son, having worked in the mines myself, these reports out of West Virginia and Kentucky are very troubling. Mining is a very dangerous occupation. I know that personally as a

result of my dad having been "blasted" as we called it, and reflecting back on my childhood friend, Stan Hudgens, whose father was working in the blossom with my dad and a rock dropped on his head and killed him. My dad brought him out of the mine.

So these reports out of the coal mines are troubling. I agree with my distinguished friend that we have to make sure that we act—not do anything harmful to the industry because it is a very important industry. Mining is the No. 2 industry in Nevada. It is not coal mining. And a lot of our mining now in Nevada is open pit, but not all of it is. We have a lot of underground mines too. The same with coal mining; coal mining is what we refer to as the hard rock business. It is open pit mining, but they have a significant amount of underground mining also.

So I look forward to working with my friend, the Republican leader, and all of those who want to make mines safer and protect this most important industry.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be authorized to sign any duly enrolled bills and joint resolutions for the period of today, April 29, and tomorrow, April 30.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURRIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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